

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:56 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. The Of-

fice of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on the Appointment of Fred F. Fielding as Counsel to the President

January 9, 2007

I have selected Fred Fielding to serve as Counsel to the President. Fred's exemplary legal career has equipped him with the judgment and expertise necessary to serve in this important position. Fred's distinguished record of public service, including 5 years as President Reagan's Counsel, makes him uniquely qualified for this position. He served with distinction on the 9/11 Commission, is a senior partner at a leading law firm, and he has earned a strong reputation for integrity. Fred is one of the most well-respected and accomplished lawyers in our Nation, and I look forward to benefiting from his wise counsel. I am pleased that he will once again take up public service in the White House.

Fred is replacing my long-time advisor and good friend, Harriet Miers. Harriet has served as a key member of my team for the last 6 years as Counsel, Deputy Chief of Staff, and Staff Secretary. I have greatly valued her sound judgment. Throughout her career, she has devoted herself to the rule of law and the cause of justice, earning a reputation as a talented lawyer dedicated to excellence. Harriet possesses a tireless work ethic and a strong commitment to serving others. Laura and I are deeply grateful for Harriet's dedication and for her friendship. We wish her the very best in the next chapter of her life.

Memorandum on Modification of the June 12, 1998, Withdrawal of Certain Areas of the United States Outer Continental Shelf From Leasing Disposition

January 9, 2007

Memorandum for the Secretary of the Interior

Subject: Modification of the June 12, 1998, Withdrawal of Certain Areas of the United States Outer Continental Shelf from Leasing Disposition

Under the authority vested in me as President of the United States, including section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, 43 U.S.C. 1341(a), I hereby modify the first sentence of the withdrawal of June 12, 1998, of certain areas

of the United States Outer Continental Shelf from leasing disposition to read as follows:

Under the authority granted in section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, 43 U.S.C. 1341(a), I hereby withdraw from disposition by leasing through June 30, 2012, (1) those areas under moratoria pursuant to sections 104 and 106 of Public Law 109-54, and (2) those areas under moratoria pursuant to section 105 of Public Law 109-54, excluding that portion of the

Central Gulf of Mexico planning area defined as the “181 South Area” in section 102(2) of title I (“Gulf of Mexico Energy Security”) in Division C of Public Law

109–432, the Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Address to the Nation on Military Operations in Iraq *January 10, 2007*

Good evening. Tonight in Iraq, the Armed Forces of the United States are engaged in a struggle that will determine the direction of the global war on terror and our safety here at home. The new strategy I outline tonight will change America’s course in Iraq and help us succeed in the fight against terror.

When I addressed you just over a year ago, nearly 12 million Iraqis had cast their ballots for a unified and democratic nation. The elections of 2005 were a stunning achievement. We thought that these elections would bring the Iraqis together and that as we trained Iraqi security forces, we could accomplish our mission with fewer American troops.

But in 2006, the opposite happened. The violence in Iraq, particularly in Baghdad, overwhelmed the political gains the Iraqis had made. Al Qaida terrorists and Sunni insurgents recognized the mortal danger that Iraq’s elections posed for their cause, and they responded with outrageous acts of murder aimed at innocent Iraqis. They blew up one of the holiest shrines in Shi’a Islam, the Golden Mosque of Samarra, in a calculated effort to provoke Iraq’s Shi’a population to retaliate. Their strategy worked. Radical Shi’a elements, some supported by Iran, formed death squads. And the result was a vicious cycle of sectarian violence that continues today.

The situation in Iraq is unacceptable to the American people, and it is unacceptable to me. Our troops in Iraq have fought bravely. They have done everything we have asked them to do. Where mistakes

have been made, the responsibility rests with me.

It is clear that we need to change our strategy in Iraq. So my national security team, military commanders, and diplomats conducted a comprehensive review. We consulted Members of Congress from both parties, our allies abroad, and distinguished outside experts. We benefited from the thoughtful recommendations of the Iraq Study Group, a bipartisan panel led by former Secretary of State James Baker and former Congressman Lee Hamilton. In our discussions, we all agreed that there is no magic formula for success in Iraq. And one message came through loud and clear: Failure in Iraq would be a disaster for the United States.

The consequences of failure are clear. Radical Islamic extremists would grow in strength and gain new recruits. They would be in a better position to topple moderate governments, create chaos in the region, and use oil revenues to fund their ambitions. Iran would be emboldened in its pursuit of nuclear weapons. Our enemies would have a safe haven from which to plan and launch attacks on the American people. On September the 11th, 2001, we saw what a refuge for extremists on the other side of the world could bring to the streets of our own cities. For the safety of our people, America must succeed in Iraq.

The most urgent priority for success in Iraq is security, especially in Baghdad. Eighty percent of Iraq’s sectarian violence occurs within 30 miles of the capital. This